

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



## State of North Carolina Office of the Governor

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For Release: **IMMEDIATE**  
Date: December 6, 2002

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### **GOV. EASLEY ACTIVATES NATIONAL GUARD TO ASSIST WINTER STORM VICTIMS**

**RALEIGH**—Gov. Mike Easley today activated the North Carolina National Guard to assist residents in the worst hit areas where power will not be restored for several days or more.

“Guardsmen will literally be going door-to-door to check on people in need, advising them of the latest information, and making sure that they are aware that shelters are available if they need them,” said Easley. The National Guard will be working with local police, fire and rescue in this effort, and will be available to local governments that request their assistance.

“The winter storm has been a challenging and difficult situation but we are fortunate to have hard working and caring people here in North Carolina to assist those in need,” Easley said. “We have been through tornadoes, hurricanes and floods, and we know that this too shall pass. It takes a lot of effort and resources, though, and we are committed to get through this as quickly as possible.”

On Thursday, Easley declared a state of emergency. The proclamation waives the size and weight restrictions for vehicles transporting equipment and supplies to restore utilities and to provide debris removal services in the state.

There are about one million customers in the state without power, as falling trees and branches were still causing outages. Estimates on when power will be restored range from hours in some areas to days in others.

Twenty-one counties and the Red Cross had shelters open last night for those without power. More than 1,600 people were reported in those shelters overnight. Citizens can get information about shelters in their area by contacting their county emergency operations centers.

The counties with shelters open were mostly in the Piedmont and Triangle areas and include: Alamance, Burke, Cabarrus, Catawba, Chatham, Cleveland, Cumberland, Davidson, Durham, Gaston, Guilford, Lincoln, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Moore, Orange, Person, Randolph, Rowan, Union, and Wake.

There has been more than 130 cases of carbon monoxide poisoning from people burning charcoal and running generators indoors in Durham, Wake, Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, Gaston and Alamance. Charcoal should never be used indoors and people using other heating sources should make sure they are properly ventilated.

The State Highway Patrol has responded to more than 3,000 weather related accidents since Wednesday.

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